

PRESIDENT CARTER'S LEADERSHIP AT CAMP DAVID: MEDIATION AS AN EXERCISE IN STRATEGIC THINKING

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The 1978 Camp David accord is one of Carter's most important accomplishments as President. The accords were a peace agreement between Israel and Egypt negotiated and mediated by Carter, his administration and a team of other state actors. The Carter Administration must have understood the nation's strategic vision and how strategy is formulated to get both parties to meet in a neutral location for a meeting to discuss differences and come to an amenable solution and agreement.

PRESIDENT CARTER'S LEADERSHIP AT CAMP DAVID: MEDIATION AS AN EXERCISE IN STRATEGIC THINKING

Presidents are senior leaders chosen by their people to fulfill the roles of head of state and government in a democratic society. They have the unique responsibility of representing the nation domestically as well as internationally. In the United States, they have broad powers to manage national affairs and the workings of the federal government—they can issue rules, regulations, and instructions which have binding force of law upon agencies. The problems governments face today are rarely simple and clear-cut. Success in the contemporary political environment requires different ways of thinking about problems and leading organizations. Senior leaders are responsible for developing strategies to cope with these perplexing and “wicked” problems. These leaders also require certain skills to operate successfully in this realm of uncertainty and complexity.¹ In short, they need these competencies to excel in an environment marked by volatility and ambiguity.²

One set of skills leaders need is the ability to think strategically. Strategic thinking formulates effective strategies consistent with the mission, vision and priorities of an organization in the global environment. Leaders use these skills to examine policy issues and conduct strategic planning with a long-term perspective. These leaders also use these skills to determine objectives and set priorities while anticipating potential threats or opportunities.³ Essentially, strategic thinking is the conceptual process that underlies two of the most critical elements for success in any organization: strategic planning and strategic management. Strategic thinking is the apex of managerial and executive thinking and it is considered both the most difficult and most important

challenge for the leaders of any public or private organization. It is imperative that the senior leadership of an organization use these thinking skills to scan the environment continuously develop a compelling strategy for the organization, and motivate all personnel within the organization to think strategically as well as align plans and policies to support and promote the organizational mission, its vision and its priorities.⁴

This paper will examine President Jimmy Carter's use of strategic thinking skills as a mediator who helped fashion the Camp David Accords, that is, the peace treaty, which Israel and Egypt agreed to in 1978. The Camp David Accords have remained in existence for more than three decades. They serve not only as the highlight of the Carter administration's foreign policy and as a momentous achievement in fostering peace in the Middle East, but they also serve as a model for achieving potential settlements in that region and other places in the world. Examining how President Carter employed strategic thinking skills in his role as a mediator may help other strategic leaders who seek to undertake the role of mediator in other instances.

Strategic Competencies

Strategic leader competencies fall under three broad categories: conceptual, technical, and interpersonal. These competencies are developed throughout the leader's career; they enable the leader to deal with tremendously complex issues and events.⁵ Strategic conceptual competencies include the thinking skills needed to understand and deal with a complex and ambiguous strategic environment. Technical competencies comprise knowledge of the external political, economic, and cultural systems that affect the organization. Interpersonal competencies consist of such abilities as consensus building, both internal and external to the organization, and the capacity to communicate effectively.⁶ Some scholars have also noted such important

skills as the art of persuasion, without which leadership abilities would suffer tremendously. “Leading at senior levels has unique challenges,” states Stephanie Trovas, global portfolio manager of Center for Creative Leadership (CCL).⁷ “Employing strategy, prioritizing and managing others are done on a much broader scale by working across multiple boundaries. Whether their compass is local, regional or global, managers of functions and divisions have to set a vision and build toward the future. At the same time, they face very real and challenging short-term pressures.”⁸ Senior leaders must be able to balance the trade-offs between short and long-term goals, make difficult decisions and build alignments within the organization. However, of all the skills mentioned, strategic thinking is the most critical competency for strategic leaders.

Five Dimensions of Strategic Thinking

Richard Meinhardt in his article, “Leadership and Strategic Thinking,” delineates five strategic thinking dimensions that senior leaders and those that advise senior leaders need to integrate to lead effectively. These five strategic thinking dimensions or lenses are: creative thinking, critical thinking, systems thinking, thinking in time and ethical thinking.⁹

Creative thinking is defined as the ability to produce novel ideas that have value to others. Creative thinking skills facilitate the understanding of the interaction that occurs between organizations and its external environment.¹⁰ Creative thinking also brings a fresh perspective to problems and can yield unorthodox solutions (which may look unsettling at first). Such thinking may be stimulated both by a freewheeling unstructured process such as brainstorming, or by a step-by-step structured process such as linear thinking.

Critical thinking refers to the cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desired outcome. Such thinking is purposeful, carefully reasoned, and goal directed. Critical thinking also involves a conscious application of reflective skepticism. In essence, it sharpens judgment.¹¹

A systems thinking method considers problem solving in terms of a holistic approach to finding an answer. One can study the components of the problem singly, but because of the interactions, it does not make practical sense to stop there.¹² Systems thinking focuses on the whole and not necessarily the parts, it sees the inter-relationships and not just the components, sees patterns of change and not snapshots, and finally it integrates holistically these elements together using principles of thought, understanding and science.¹³

Thinking in time is the cognitive lens of thinking which was greatly influenced by the academic work of Neustadt and May, along with intellectual discourse with historians and futurists.¹⁴ Thinking in time is complex because truly understanding the uses of history requires great intellectual energy. It provides a disciplined way of examining history's lessons to inform decision on current issues while considering prospective trends to better enable future success.¹⁵ In their book, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers*, Richard Neustadt and Ernest May argue that understanding historical events can assist leaders in improving their judgment and by honing this skill they can make prudent assessments of the feasibility of proposed actions.¹⁶ They emphasize three components in making historical assessments: (1) recognition, that is, the future has no place to come from but the past, thus the past has predictive value; (2) continuous comparison, that is, constant movement from the

present to the future to the past and back; and (3) understanding that what matters for the future in the present is how the present departs from the past.¹⁷

Lastly, ethical thinking, simply stated, refers to standards of behavior that tell human beings how they ought to act with respect to the many positions in which they find themselves.¹⁸ Leaders recognize that it is not an option to avoid issues merely because they are too difficult, understanding that the issue or challenge is no longer about them, but about the health and welfare of the institution or perhaps the larger environment, including the community of nations.¹⁹ Leaders must consider possible ethical dilemmas that cross boundaries on multiple political, organizational and culture levels.

These five dimensions of strategic thinking are the key elements Carter applied to his mediation efforts between Israeli and Egyptian leaders for thirteen days in 1978. His successful application of these skills led to the peace treaty he sought to secure. These skills have applicability in the conduct of international mediation.

International Mediation

International mediation presents a complex, often “wicked” problem that requires the use of strategic thinking skills. For a mediator to be successful, he must possess a wide range of other talents. One of the most important competencies, but perhaps least appreciated, is the ability to actively listen to what a party is saying and to note what the party is not saying. All too often we hear what we expect someone to say rather than what is actually said. It is a fundamental principle that mediators must not prejudge the case before them or impose their own prejudices on the parties. Furthermore, a mediator has to be able to tune into “where the speaker is coming from” and read the “subtext” or hidden messages given out by the parties.²⁰

The mediator should be equipped with, at the very least, the framework of the arguments of the parties and their statements of the case or problem. This background information enables the mediator to prepare for the mediation session and to plan a strategy for the conduct of the mediation. The mediator's ideas of the case will be formed from these submissions. This scenario relies on the premise that the parties have identified their needs and have provided the mediator with all relevant information in advance. There is, however, a flaw in the assumption that providing this information will ensure the mediator has everything needed to fulfill his duties. The problem is that one or both of the parties may have a "hidden agenda." A failure to deal successfully with such an agenda can fatally damage the mediation process. Finding the hidden agenda can be a complex task. Nonetheless agendas, if they exist, can be successfully dealt with once they have been identified.

Arab-Israeli Peace: A History of Agendas (Hidden and Otherwise)

In the wake of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, another conflict between these two parties loomed as the most intractable political confrontation in the world. Israel, as a result of the war, had conquered large amounts of territory from Egypt, Syria, and Jordan and showed little inclination to return significant portions of it. The Arabs, for their part, vowed never to have direct diplomatic contact with the Jewish state. The isolation of the two sides from one another was so complete that another war seemed likely.²¹

Following the 1967 war, President Lyndon Johnson and his administration stressed the need for a comprehensive solution to the issues separating the parties.²² Johnson and his advisors sought consensus from the United Nations (UN). The President presented to the United Nations his foreign policy objectives regarding Israel

and the Arab states, which he captured in five key points: (1) political independence for Israel, (2) territorial integrity for all states, (3) recognized right to national life for all states, (4) justice for the refugees displaced by the war, (5) limits on arms sales in the region and (6) free maritime passage through regional waterways and canals by all states. Johnson and his advisors sought to incorporate these elements in a UN Security Council Resolution as a means of endorsing the peace process and thereby make it appealing to all parties.²³ The Administration concluded that ignoring the Arab-Israeli conflict would lead to further Soviet intervention in the Middle East and the Soviet Union gaining increased sway with the Arab states. In short, it was in American interests to resolve the Israeli-Arab controversy peacefully.

Johnson tried to promote a diplomatic process, but Saudi Arabia feared the Soviet Union was exercising a major influence in the region, and Egypt, Syria, and Jordan wanted to recover their territories and negotiate from a common position. Israel, however, was willing to deal with only one state at a time.²⁴

After lengthy discussions among members of the United Nations Security Council, a final draft for a Security Council resolution was presented by the British Ambassador, Lord Caradon, on November 22, 1967. It was adopted on the same day. This resolution, numbered 242, established provisions and principles which, it was hoped, would lead to a solution of the conflict. United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (UNSCR 242) became the cornerstone of Middle East diplomatic efforts in the coming decades.²⁵

The most controversial clause in Resolution 242 is the call for the "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict." This section is

linked to a second unambiguous clause calling for "termination of all claims or states of belligerency" and the recognition that "every State in the area" has the "right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force."²⁶

The Nixon Administration, which took office in January 1969, felt the United States should pursue a more vigorous diplomatic policy with respect to the Middle East. President Richard Nixon declared at his first presidential news conference that, "I consider the Middle East a powder keg, very explosive, it needs to be defused. I am open to suggestions that may cool it off and reduce the possibility of another explosion because the next explosion in the Middle East, I think could involve very well a confrontation between the nuclear powers, which we want to avoid."²⁷ According to some scholarly interpreters, Nixon's fear of a nuclear confrontation was driving his Middle East policy. Nixon's Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East, Joseph Sisco, decided to concentrate the Administration's efforts on Egypt because the ongoing war of attrition as signaled by the sporadic exchange of artillery fire and aircraft by the Israelis and Egyptians along the Suez Canal threatened to get out of hand.²⁸

In October 1969, Nixon agreed to Secretary of State William Rogers' persistent request that the United States openly support an Israeli return to the 1967 borders. Rogers and Sisco immediately passed on their major concession to Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet Ambassador to the United States. The initiative later became known as the Rogers Plan, which consisted of a document with a short preamble calling for a comprehensive peace accord between Egypt and Israel to be negotiated under the auspices of Ambassador Gunnar Jarring, a Swedish diplomat that UN Secretary-General U Thant had appointed special envoy for the Middle East peace process.²⁹ The

essential conditions of Rogers' plan were for Israel to return to the prewar Sinai border and in return, Egypt would agree to end its state of war and allow Israeli ships to use the Suez Canal. The two sides would also have to agree on the establishment of demilitarized zones through direct talks³⁰.

The Egyptian, Israeli and Soviet rejection of the Rogers plan put an end to the first Middle East initiative of the Nixon administration. U.S negotiators agreed in retrospect that it had been naïve to assume that the United States would be able to separate the Soviet Union's interests from those of Egypt. Throughout the negotiations, Moscow stuck close to the Egyptian position. The only time it appeared to differ was when the Soviets agreed with the United States that Arab concessions should accompany Israeli withdrawals, instead of following them, as well as that the Arabs should grant diplomatic recognition to Israel. But even these two concessions did not amount to much, since Moscow could not induce Egypt to accept them.³¹

Carter and Critical Thinking

Carter understood the complexities of the past administrations' all or nothing approach to an agreement. He chose UN Resolution 242 as the basis for the peace agreement he wished to attain. In attempting to achieve a peaceful agreement, Carter's personal philosophy and objectives provided a point of departure for the foreign policy priorities of the new administration. He came to the presidency with the determination to make U.S foreign policy more humane and moral. In part because of his religious beliefs and in part because it was useful in the campaign, he went on record as not only rejecting "the Lone Ranger" diplomatic style of Henry Kissinger in the preceding Nixon and Ford administrations, but also to object to its excessive preoccupation with

balance-of-power politics. Carter genuinely believed he could shape a more decent world.³²

In a speech given at the University of Notre Dame in May 1977, Carter claimed that, “We can have a foreign policy that is democratic, that is based on fundamental values, and that uses power and influence, which we have, for humane purposes. We can also have a foreign policy that the American people both support and, for a change know about and understand.”³³ Nonetheless, Carter was confronted by several challenges that had a high probability of frustrating his efforts as it had the past two administrations. They were unsuccessful in addressing the concerns of both parties, thus leaving much more work to be accomplished.

Carter also knew that the longer Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat did not confront this issue, the less likely was the prospect for peace. Carter’s strategy was simple: get the two adversaries together to develop and implement a negotiated peace in the region. How to do it was easy in concept, how to get them to meet and keep them together to work out such an agreement was the difficult problem. Carter understood the criticality of what would occur if peace was not obtained in the area: more violence, human suffering, and economic instability in the region. Carter conducted weekly foreign affairs meetings with his foreign policy advisors to discuss how his strategy might be implemented. On July 31, 1978, Carter decided to send Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to the Middle East to invite Begin and Sadat to come to the United States for the purpose of mediating an agreement between Israel and Egypt. Carter selected the presidential retreat, Camp David, in the Catoctin Mountains of Maryland as the site for the talks.³⁴

It was a strategic risk to bring these adversaries together given their almost intransigent positions. He also knew he would have to use his skills as a senior leader, to shape the environment in a way that would entice them to meet. Vance was to take two personally written letters to the two adversaries requesting a meeting to discuss a potential peace treaty. Carter undertook this approach in spite of the previous rejections from Sadat about further negotiations. Carter was confident that Sadat was talking to other Arab leaders about military action since Israel was unyielding regarding relinquishing the West Bank territory it had gained in the war. Carter was fairly confident that Sadat would accept his invitation to cooperate with him, but had no idea how Begin would react. Carter knew that whatever took place in the meetings could not leak to the public. To Carter's surprise, both men accepted his invitation enthusiastically though previous indications noted Sadat rejection of any further negotiations of the matter.³⁵

Carter's decision to invite the two adversaries to meet with him proved to be a turning point in the effort to remove the only serious military threat to Israel's existence and provide a blueprint for peace in the Middle East.³⁶ Throughout the talks, both parties, at times, threatened to leave. Carter continually talked to both parties, driving home the fact that a negotiated settlement in the form of a treaty was imperative. To get both parties to buy-in to such an idea, Carter personalized the negotiations between the two parties. For example, on the second day (of what would end up being thirteen days of negotiations and mediation), during the first session of meetings, Carter wanted the two parties to get better acquainted, believing that a cordial engagement would result in a more fruitful exchange later on in the negotiations. Neither party trusted the

other, but both trusted Carter. Critical to all of this was Carter's understanding of both parties' perspectives and proposals regarding their needs, both on the part of the two leaders, Begin and Sadat, and the security arrangements they thought were critical to their nations. However, despite his best efforts, such a step proved unproductive. Little did Carter know that only three days into the talks, it would be the last time all three parties would meet together to negotiate. Carter knew that he had to keep both delegations at Camp David, so to offset this unwillingness of the two parties to meet face-to-face, Carter determined that he had to conduct separate negotiating sessions with both parties to review documents and draft language for a potential treaty. Additionally, he spoke daily with the two leaders requesting that they not leave, discussing their particular concerns, and reminding them that the world was watching this pivotal event and its outcome. Carter constantly appealed to the two adversaries throughout the 13 day retreat, emphasizing the importance of the final product of a written agreement of stability in the Region.

Carter and Creative Thinking

Carter's use of his critical thinking skills to get both leaders to accept his invitation to meet at Camp David was a great accomplishment, by sending Cy Vance with personal invitations and asking for both leaders support and conducting the meetings after the Moslem holy days, as Sadat suggested, was the pivotal turning point, but shaping the environment and atmosphere to conduct such negotiations involved the use of his creative thinking skills. An example of his creativity was requesting that the spouses of the two leaders should accompany them. Bringing their families to Camp David, Carter thought, could create a more congenial atmosphere. Sadat's wife was unable to accompany him; she remained in Paris to be with one of their grandchildren

who was ill. Begin's wife did attend and was often helpful in calming Begin when he was frustrated with the process of the talks.

The location of Camp David is beautiful with the cottages and paths snuggled on top and down on side of a small mountain and sheltered by a thick growth of trees. A security fence encompasses about 125 acres of rocky terrain and close proximity of living quarters creates an atmosphere of both isolation and intimacy, conducive to easing tensions and encouraging informality. A few golf carts and bicycles were available, but most of the time people walked to various locations in the Camp. Almost everyone in the Camp spoke English so interpreters were not needed.³⁷

Carter thought bringing the two leaders to an environment that was peaceful would assist in expediting the peace process and let both parties to come to an understanding that peace in the region was of the utmost importance. Carter initially thought the talks would last only three days, but was willing to stay a week if needed. Fashioning an atmosphere that would promote discussion took careful and imaginative planning. Carter also understood the cultural differences between the two parties so all arrangements had been made to accommodate the parties including cooks trained in the preparation of American, Egyptian and kosher foods. Additionally, all parties had secretarial staff at their disposal and communication facilities for managing the affairs of the respective governments while they were secluded in Maryland, thousands of miles from their capitols. Carter wanted both leaders to want for nothing so they could focus all their attention on achieving a negotiated peace treaty.³⁸

Carter and Systems Thinking

Carter presided over the entire process systemically. He was determined to use all the assets available to him to obtain for a negotiated peace between the two nations.

He knew to deal with both leaders without their teams of experts would be fruitless. As noted earlier, systems thinking focuses on the whole and not necessarily the parts.

Carter's invitation to Begin and Sadat indicated that they should also bring their trusted diplomatic aides who would be critical to writing any type of settlement. After speaking with Sadat and Begin throughout the 13 day period, Carter would also meet with the respective delegates of both parties recognizing that these individuals could assist in advancing the discussions and serve as potential allies in the mediation effort.

Moreover, in the interests of both parties, Carter personally crafted some of the language associated with the treaty and possessed a team of his own experts that were crucial in keeping the talks alive. These teams from the respective countries continued to work the intricate and delicate wording of the treaty and would become the pivotal system that kept the talks alive.³⁹

Carter and Thinking in Time

After six days of meetings, Carter was faced with no amenable agreement by both parties. He then decided to take the two leaders on a trip to Gettysburg the next afternoon (a Sunday) to ease tensions and perhaps to break the deadlock. The only rule on the tour was: no discussion of peace talks. Carter invited an historian to Camp David to give a special briefing on the battles fought in the area during the Civil War. Both leaders were familiar with the terrain, tactics and strategic circumstances prevailing at the time of the battle as they had studied it in their military schools. During the tour, Carter reminded the leaders that the people of his country had suffered dreadfully from the civil war. The weapons of the time had become technologically more advanced compared to medical care and science. Also during the tour, the group examined the field pieces and the casualty figures from both sides were recounted.

Carter used the Gettysburg tour to stress that the Camp David meeting was the culmination of months of hard work and years of planning in the hope of bringing peace. The consequences of failure were clear. He also stressed the horrors of constant conflict and the challenges of raising families in such an environment because in the end, no one wins.⁴⁰

Ethical Thinking - Carter's Belief and Trust

Carter saw himself as a facilitator and he approached the talks from both moral and problem-solving standpoints. Carter's strong religious background as a Christian caused him to see the Middle East peace process as the responsibility of the United States. He knew both parties distrusted each other, but maybe they would trust him to be a fair and honest broker in his role as mediator. Carter was a man with extraordinary degree of self control and self discipline. As a result, he was able to sit through exasperating mediation sessions with Begin, the more difficult negotiator, without ever—except on rare occasions—letting his anger show.⁴¹ Carter found other ways to deal with Begin that went beyond merely enduring his tedious style of negotiation. Carter learned that talking with Begin about biblical history, a subject both men knew well, or about their families, to which each was devoted, often made it possible to appeal to Begin's emotional and softer side.⁴² Carter's personal friendship with Egyptian leader, Sadat, developed and deepened, becoming a fulcrum for much of the heavy diplomatic engagement that was essential to any movement towards peace between the two parties.

Carter and Sadat shared some important personal qualities as well. Both were deeply religious men who shared an essentially optimistic view of the world. Both were strong-willed, capable of long-range planning and willing to take genuine political risk in

their quest for major accomplishments.⁴³ Carter believed both political leaders to be generally well-intentioned and felt that it was possible to fashion a peace settlement that would leave both men satisfied. Regardless of his official role, Carter's personal interests and U.S. national interests required that he be an active player in the mediation process. U.S. national interests revolved around promoting stability in the Middle East, to shore up its relationships with Israel and the Arab world.

Conclusion

"After four wars, despite vast human efforts, the Holy Land does not yet enjoy the blessings of peace. Conscious of grave issues which face us, we place our trust in the God of our fathers, from whom we seek wisdom and guidance. As we meet here at Camp David we ask people of all faiths to pray with us that peace and justice may result from these deliberations."⁴⁴ This was a statement issued at Camp David on September 6, 1978, the first day of the negotiations. Every presidential administration, from that of Harry S. Truman until Carter pursued the same goals for the United States in the Middle East: independence and security for Israel, access to oil, and containment of Soviet influence.⁴⁵ However, in the end, only President Carter was successful.

President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin underscored their belief that the successful meeting at Camp David was because of Carter's role in this historic event. President Sadat expressed his sincere gratitude and heartfelt thanks to President Carter. "Dear President Carter, in this historic moment, I would like to express to you my heartfelt congratulations and appreciation. For long days and nights, you devoted your time and energy to the pursuit of peace. You have been most courageous when you took the gigantic step of convening this meeting. The challenge was great and the risks were high, but so was your determination." But Carter's role went beyond merely

convening the meeting. As Sadat observed, “You made a commitment to be a full partner in the peace process. I am happy to say that you have honored your commitment.”⁴⁶ The signing of the framework for the comprehensive peace settlement has had significance far beyond the event. It signals the emergence of a new peace initiative, with the American nation in the heart of the process. Sadat continued his praise of Carter, concluding that the President, as far as his historic experience is concerned, worked harder than the forefathers did in Egypt in building the pyramids.⁴⁷

Prime Minister Begin also thanked Carter for his efforts in the peace process. He stated, “We use to go to bed at Camp David between three and four o’clock in the morning, arise as we are used to since our boyhoods between five and six and continue working. The President showed interest in every section, every paragraph, every sentence, every word, and every letter of the framework agreements.” Begin recognized the challenge of the mediation process. He continued, “We had some difficult moments—as usually there are some crises in negotiations, as usually somebody gives a hint that perhaps he would like to pick up and go home. But ultimately, ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States won the day and peace now celebrates a great victory for the nations of Egypt and Israel and for mankind.” Begin ended by recognizing the historical significance of the Camp David efforts: “Mr. President, you subscribe your name forever in the history of two ancient civilized peoples, the people of Egypt and the people of Israel. Thank you Mr. President.”⁴⁸

On March 26, 1979, Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty in Washington, D.C. Carter's role in attaining agreement on the treaty was essential. Aaron David Miller

interviewed many officials for his book *The Much Too Promised Land* (2008) and concluded the following: "No matter whom I spoke to—Americans, Egyptians, or Israeli—most everyone said the same thing: no Carter, no peace treaty."⁴⁹

Carter has been the only President who has successfully brokered a peace agreement in the Middle East. His predecessors and his successors have tried, but for various reasons have not succeeded. There is no doubt that timing was an essential element of attaining an agreement, but that in itself does not guarantee success. Carter stands out as an exemplar in terms of how he mediated and ultimately, forged the peace treaty. He clearly demonstrated the five dimensions of strategic thinking in his handling of the negotiations. They were the foundations of his strategic leadership. Perhaps a time ripe for future peace treaties in the Middle East will come again. If it does, it will require the mediator to possess the same skills that Carter had to achieve such a treaty, someone with a similar ethical stance, trusted by the parties involved, willing to exercise creativity and think critically, systemically, and understand how history is not merely events in the past, but a stream that continues to flow and can be channeled productively. These are the skills essential to the promotion of peaceful conflict resolution. While Carter did not accomplish goals alone, he should be recognized for this tremendous achievement as a mediator, for helping two parties overcome their differences and agree to a treaty that has existed for more than three decades. It is a model treaty and a significant contribution to the ideal of world peace.

Endnotes

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